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TAGS: [ECON](#) [EFIN](#) [PGOV](#) [IZ](#)
SUBJECT: CURRENT STATUS OF GOI FUNDING FOR CLCS

REF: A. BAGHDAD CLASSIFIED OI OF 12/05/07: COR CHAIR
RECEIVES CLC TRANSITION BRIEF
[1](#)B. BAGHDAD CLASSIFIED OI OF 11/07/07: SALARY
DISTORTIONS CONTRIBUTE TO BRAIN DRAIN
[1](#)C. BAGHDAD 3722: ESTABLISHING EMPLOYMENT FOR CLCS
[1](#)D. BAGHDAD 3649: SHIA DEPUTY ON CLCS

[1](#)1. (SBU) Begin Summary: Coalition efforts to secure counterpart GOI funding for the transition of Concerned Local Citizens (CLCs or Awakening Councils) have garnered positive responses from Finance Minister Bayan Jabr and Chair of the Council of Representatives (CoR) Economic Committee Dr. Haider al-Abadi. Jabr claimed that the Council of Ministers approved an allocation of USD 150 million in the 2008 federal budget, but admitted that the CoR would ultimately determine funding levels for CLCs in the budget. Dr. al-Abadi told MG Bergner that he would support the proposed allocation in the 2008 budget. We have not yet seen documentary evidence that the CoR is considering explicit funding for CLCs in ongoing budget deliberations. End Summary.

[1](#)2. (SBU) In a December 13 meeting with MG S. Scott, Finance Minister Bayan Jabr expressed his support for the CLC reintegration plans and said that the approximately USD 70 million in the 2008 DDR budget and USD 126 million of unspent funds in the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs (MoLSA) 2007 budget could theoretically be used to support CLC and Joint Technical Education and Reintegration Program (JTERP) plans. Jabr indicated that authorization to carryover unspent 2007 MoLSA funds would require some finessing and would be tied to timely budget passage without providing further details. He expressed his support in securing the carryover authorization. Jabr objected to paying CLCs the current USD 300 per month salary, and noted that salaries would need to be reduced to USD 150-200 to gain his support. (Note: The current salary rate for CLCs is nearly double the going rate for entry-level skilled workers. See ref B. End Note) Jabr said he anticipated certain parties in the CoR would seek to block the allocation due to concern over the potential militarization of Iraqi society.

[1](#)3. (SBU) During a December 6 meeting, MG Bergner raised the CLC funding issue with Dr. Haider al-Abadi following an earlier December 4 meeting at which Dr. al-Abadi received a brief on CLC transition plans (ref A). Dr. al-Abadi claimed that initial suspicions that the CLCs represented a new militia had been largely dispelled. He also noted that he raised the prospect of GOI funding for CLC transition programs with Finance Minister Bayan Jabr and Prime Minister Maliki who expressed their support. He was optimistic that the USG request for counterpart funding of approximately USD 150 million in the 2008 federal budget would be successful, reiterating his own support for the request.

Comment

¶4. (SBU) We will know more about the fate of CLC funding in the 2008 budget once the CoR reconvenes, and budget deliberations resume. At this stage, we do not know how the CoR will react to this request although the Sadrist bloc and other Shia groups (reftel D) will likely oppose it. We will continue our outreach to key CoR deputies to shore up support for this important initiative.

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